

# ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE

## TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION CONTRACTS

A SUCCESS STORY



In August 1990, Ellsworth AFB, in South Dakota, was placed on the National Priority List. In response to this action, the Air Force entered into a Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) with the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of South Dakota to clean up contaminated sites at the installation. The FFA, finalized in early 1992, mandated specific environmental initiatives and defined time lines and milestones. Required cleanup actions include:

- expedited remediation of a known area of serious contamination,
- interim remedial action to facilitate early cleanup of fuel contamination in flight-line areas,
- basewide remediation of underground storage tanks, and
- accelerated cleanup of critical sites near base boundaries.

The FFA stipulated penalties of up to \$10,000 per week for failure to comply.

### TERC WORKS



*Thermo fusion welding machine being used to weld high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe.*

To accelerate cleanup at Ellsworth and ensure compliance with the FFA, USACE used TERC. Under TERC, a single contractor may conduct all aspects of the remediation effort, from initial characterization to final cleanup. Moreover, field changes may be executed quickly and efficiently.

Environmental cleanup at Ellsworth has been facilitated by an empowered committee that includes representatives of the Air Force, the federal and state regulatory agencies, contractors, and USACE. Committee

Most seriously contaminated sites remediated a year ahead of schedule.

members have established a strong partnership of mutual respect, communication, and cooperation that emphasizes regulatory compliance, fiscal responsibility, and acceleration of cleanup efforts.

The committee meets weekly to ensure timely resolution of critical issues. The committee has also been involved in

scheduling—a critical issue because limited field work can be done in South Dakota during the winter. To ensure that the maximum amount of field work can be done during the relatively short construction season, document preparation and reviews must be accelerated. All partnering members provided input into the process and agreed to accelerated review times.

The base Remedial Project Manager is using TERC flexibility to overlap CERCLA phase work; once regulator comments are received on the draft Feasibility Study report, the contractor is authorized to initiate the Remedial Design phase.

The first TERC task order was awarded in July 1994; total awards to date exceed \$21 million. Remediation at Ellsworth has progressed quickly. Current projections indicate that the most seriously contaminated sites will be remediated at least one year ahead of the initial EPA schedule projections, and several other sites will be remediated more than two years sooner than projected. By using a dedicated partnering approach and a TERC rather than the traditional fixed-price contracting method, the government will save more than \$30 million.

Without the flexibility afforded by TERC and the ability to obtain timely, informed decisions from the committee, it is unlikely that the remediation project at Ellsworth would be such a success.

Avoided \$10,000 per week in penalties by meeting regulatory milestones.



**OMAHA DISTRICT**

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